First records of the Bay-vented Cotinga *Doliornis sclateri* in Colombia

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Received 7 April 1993

The Andean cotingas in the genera *Ampelion, Doliornis* and *Zaratornis* form a natural group of four species with a controversial taxonomic treatment. The distribution of these cotingas ranges from northern Colombia and western Venezuela south to central Bolivia where they inhabit isolated woodlots above timberline and cloud forests at high elevations. The overall plumage of both sexes is inconspicuous except for a nuchal crest which is usually folded but striking when displayed. All species are mainly frugivorous and are usually found in pairs, although occasionally they are found in groups at fruiting trees (Parker 1981, Snow 1982, Hilty & Brown 1986). The Bay-vented Cotinga *Doliornis sclateri* was described by Taczanowski (1874) who suggested a close relationship with *Ampelion*. Later, *Doliornis* was merged in *Ampelion* by Bond (1956). The main external difference between the two genera is the narrower, less hooked bill of *Doliornis* (Snow 1982). Recent studies based on electrophoretic, syringeal, and cranial characters support the split of *Doliornis* (one species) from *Ampelion* (two species), within a monophyletic group including the genera *Zaratornis* (one species) and *Phytotoma* (three species) (Lanyon & Lanyon 1989).

Doliornis sclateri is a rare species with a local distribution. In Peru, it is known from the eastern slopes of the Andes in the Departments of Huánuco, Junín and La Libertad, where it inhabits the upper limit of the temperate cloud forest at or near timberline from 2500 to 3300 m (Parker 1982). The species has recently been observed in extreme southern Ecuador in Podocarpus National Park, Loja Province (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990). Here I report the first sightings of this species in Colombia.

On 31 August 1989 I observed, at close range, a Bay-vented Cotinga at 3530 m altitude, in the Reserva Natural Cañon del Quindío (*c.* 4°37′N, 75°28′W), Municipality of Salento, Quindío Department on the western slope of the Cordillera Central. The bird was quietly perched on the top of a very dense thicket about 1.5 m high at the edge of a forest heavily covered with mosses and other epiphytes. Predominant trees at the site included species of *Weinmannia, Freziera* and *Polylepis*.

At the same locality on 23 October 1989, J. Pérez and I observed a pair of *Doliornis* at a distance of 5 m. The birds were feeding on whitish fruits of a small tree (*Miconia chlorocarpa*). Afterwards they flew away without having called. This second sighting was at 3620 m on the ridge of the Cordillera Central about 0.5 km from the first locality, on the border between Quindío and Tolima Departments. The two birds were at the paramo-forest ecotone (treeline), in a low impenetrable thicket of small trees and bushes. This low forest is frequently buffeted by wind and covered with mist. Several species of shrubby Melastomataceae and Ericaeae are numerous, as well as species of *Weinmannia, Hesperomeles*

and *Hedyosmum*, all of which are covered with abundant mosses, lichens and some orchids; the adjacent paramo is characterized by grasses (*Calamagrostis*), shrubs (*Hypericum*), terrestrial bromeliads (*Puya*), and *Espeletia hartwegiana*, among other species (for further details see van der Hammen *et al.* 1983). In early 1991, another Bay-vented Cotinga was observed at a lower elevation farther north in the Reserva Natural Cañon del Quindío by K. Schultze (pers. comm.); this individual was at forest edge feeding on white fruits, probably those of *Tournefortia* sp. (S. Arango pers. comm.).

The two individuals observed on 23 October were an adult and juvenile by plumage (see Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990). The adult had black lores, crown and forehead, dark grey upperparts, and brown rump. Its underparts were chestnut, including undertail coverts and belly up to the lower breast. The adult's nuchal crest was folded although blown by the wind. The juvenile coloration was similar to that of the adult, except that the crown was grey instead of black; I did not observe a nuchal crest.

Fjeldså & Krabbe (1990) suggested that the sightings of *Doliornis* in southern Ecuador could represent an undescribed species of *Doliornis*, although specimens are needed to confirm this possibility. Interestingly those birds I observed in Colombia differed conspicuously from specimens from Peru, the latter having the upper back as well as the rump dark grey while the Colombian birds had dark grey backs and brown rumps.

Observations of *Doliornis* described here are similar to those reported from Peru (Parker 1982, Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990). All sightings occurred in forest at or close to treeline. Other sightings also described these birds as rather inactive, remaining quiet and motionless for periods of time on the top of trees and shrubs at forest edge or close to it. In Alto Quindío *Doliornis* is sympatric with the more common Red-crested Cotinga *Ampelion rubrocristatus*, which is found from treeline down to 2600 m. Both species are of about the same size and shape. *Doliornis* can be easily distinguished from *A. rubrocristatus* by its darker upperparts, chestnut underparts, absence of a white patch on the tail, and its less obvious thinner bill.

Doliornis sclateri is a rare species in the Alto Quindío region. I observed it only twice (3 individuals) during 42 bird censuses (or 0.3 individuals per 10 km of transect) conducted over a period of 13 months in high-altitude forest and paramo-forest ecotone. Although I may have overlooked it at times because of its cryptic coloration and lethargic, silent habits, the very low frequency of observation offers an index of the species' abundance. I never found it at lower elevations, although I regularly conducted censuses down to 2500 m.

The above observations are the first records of *Doliornis* in Colombia and in the northern hemisphere. They represent a northerly range extension of more than 1000 km from the northernmost published locality in Podocarpus National Park, Loja, southern Ecuador (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990). The species will probably be found in other high Andean forests in the Cordillera Central of Colombia and less likely on the Cordillera Oriental or Cordillera Occidental of Colombia.

Although the Colombian avifauna is one of the largest in the world, with 1745 species presently recorded (Carrizosa & Hernández 1990), it remains relatively understudied. New species and new records for the country are still being reported in regions not far from major cities (Renjifo 1991, Stiles 1992). Of special interest are the forests of the Andean region and its foothills, not only because of the extraordinary array of habitats and diversity of fauna that they support, but also because of the need to improve the effectiveness of current protected areas and to establish new ones. The finding of the Bay-vented Cotinga is an indication of the unreported, unknown diversity of forests that are disappearing at an alarming rate as a result of habitat destruction.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to T. Parker, R. Ridgely and F. G. Stiles for their early suggestions. I am grateful to J. Blake, B. Loiselle, C. Hochwender and T. Parker who read the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions for its improvement, and to D. Willard of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago for permitting me to examine specimens of *Doliornis* from Peru. I thank S. Arango, C. Campos, L. Pavajeau and J. Pérez who aided greatly with the field work and K. Schultze for allowing me to use his observations. Plant identifications were done at Instituto de Ciencias Naturales (Universidad Nacional), Bogotá, and Herbario de Antioquia (Universidad de Antioquia), Medellín. These records were made during a study supported financially by Wildlife Conservation International and Fondo FEN Colombia, and logistically by Fundación Herencia Verde. The staff of the Corporación Regional del Quindío, especially H. Castaño, gave assistance during the work at the Reserva Natural del Cañon del Quindío.

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